

AGENDA ITEM III B

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM

L. E. FLETCHER TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ASSOCIATE OF GENERAL STUDIES (AGS)

AGENDA ITEM III B

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM

L. E. FLETCHER TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ASSOCIATE OF GENERAL STUDIES (AGS)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

L. E. Fletcher campus of the Louisiana Technical College (LTC) was re-designated a "Technical/Community College" by the Board of Regents on June 26, 2003. The College serves Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes.

STAFF SUMMARY

1. Curriculum

Students pursuing this degree organize their coursework around general education requirements (33 credit hours). Students then select 6 credit hours of courses in three enrichment blocks (Arts & Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social/Behavioral Sciences) for an additional 18 hours. A course concentration area of 15 hours is then required. Course titles and descriptions are consistent with those of other similar colleges. Total credits required: 66.

2. Need

The program is an essential offering of any community college. Its flexibility allows for a diversity of educational experiences without having to create separate stand-alone programs; it is also designed to serve students who will attend FTCC as a result of the new admission standards established in the Board of Regents Master Plan. The staff further notes that students must be enrolled in a degree program to be eligible to receive financial aid; the flexibility of this program makes it easier for the College to designate students as such.

3. Students

The following enrollment and graduation figures mainly reflect the expected effects of the Board of Regents' framework of selective admissions. Students who are enrolled in the College and taking general education courses without seeking a degree may also be interested in the program. Some students are expected to transfer before graduation.

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
Enrollment	30	64	76	84	90

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
Graduates	0	14	24	34	36

4. Faculty

All faculty who have credentials consistent with SACS-COC principles of accreditation will participate in this program. (Faculty credentials are on file in the Office of Academic Affairs.). To initiate this program, however, the College projects a need to hire an additional five new full-time faculty. For next Spring, the College plans to hire additional instructors in Mathematics and Computer Science; for next Fall, additional instructors in Speech, History, and Physical Science. Advertisements are in place for the Spring hires; additional advertisements for Fall positions will go out in March/April.

5. Library

The College is in the process of developing in compliance with SACS-COC standards a library adequate to meet its new mission as a Technical Community College. To do this, the College projects a need to spend \$300,000 in the next three years. In FY 2003-04, \$208,775 was spent on needed books and equipment. The College has also become a member of the LOUIS library network (as of July 2004), which provides further excellent support. Students also have access to the Allen J. Ellender Memorial Library on the Nicholls State University (NSU) campus, eighteen miles away, and to the collections at the local Terrebonne Parish Library.

6. Facilities/Equipment

The College currently has nine classrooms (three with computer labs) dedicated to the general education division. There are also eight offices with capacity to house fifteen instructors. No additional space is needed; no special new facilities are needed.

7. Administration

The proposed program will be administered by an AGS Coordinator, who will report to the Dean of Instruction.

8. Accreditation

This program is not eligible for any specific programmatic accreditation. As part of its entire range of degree offerings, this program will be part of Fletcher's eventual application to SACS/CoC for institutional accreditation. The College is actively working on this SACS/CoC application.

9. Budget

The College projects a need for five additional full-time instructors and so will request additional state

appropriations. Cost and revenue figures are as follows. **The figures below represent new (not recurring) costs and revenues for a given year:**

<u>Costs</u>	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Faculty	36,000	146,880	7,315	7,608
Staff	24,000	25,920	1,996	2,017
Library	2,000	3,000	0	0
	\$ 60,000	\$ 172,880	\$ 9,311	\$ 9,625

The College recently was permitted by the Legislature to raise its tuition to \$32 per credit hour; this figure is scheduled to rise over the next three years to a minimum of \$50 per credit hour. It was also given the authority to raise tuition to the annual median in Louisiana for community college tuition (approx. \$65 per credit hour).

<u>Revenues</u>	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
State	\$ 56,240	\$ 149,304	0	0
Tuition, Fees	5,760	26,496	9,311	9,625
	\$ 62,000	\$ 175,800	\$ 9,311	\$ 9,625

Consequently, the College projects that this program will likely be self-sustaining by its third year of implementation.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The curriculum is consistent with established norms for degrees of this type. Need for the program exists. Student interest is likely. Faculty are currently inadequate in number to initiate the program, but the College has provided a reasonable plan for acquiring needed faculty. Library resources are developing; adequate resources will be available for students by the time the program is implemented. Facilities are adequate for implementation. Administrative plans are reasonable. Program accreditation is not an issue. The budget is reasonable if tuition levels rise as projected and the College is successful in gathering external funds for library support.

Given that the College is in the process of hiring faculty and developing a library, the staff recommends conditional approval with stipulations for required reports as indicated in the motion below.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant conditional approval of the proposed Associate of General Studies program (CIP 24.0102) at L. E. Fletcher Technical Community College, with three stipulations:

- 1. By January 15, 2005, the College shall inform the Commissioner of Higher Education of the status of its application to SACS/CoC for institutional candidacy;***

2. *By September 1, 2005, the College shall submit a report to the Commissioner of Higher Education which describes the College's progress toward hiring five qualified full-time faculty for the program and developing its library to meet SACS-COC standards;*
3. *Upon receipt of the report required in #2 above, the Board of Regents shall consider a date for program implementation.*